

K Ā K I N Ī .

Kākinī is frequently referred to as Kākinī, Kākana, and Kāginī in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit literature. It means coin of a small value or a small sum of money or a small weight. Earliest mention of Kākinī is found in the Arthasāstra of Kautilya. According to it, it was one-fourth of the Māshaka¹ and is prescribed as the fee of the² Superintendent of Weights, to be paid by traders, as the wages of the manufacturer of the object from one pala of lead³ and as the hire of the⁴ gambling die. Kākanī as a weight is also mention-⁵ed in the Arthasāstra for weighing gold; but how it was related to the other weights of gold is nowhere mentioned.

There after the Kākinī is referred to in the⁶ Jātakas. Patañjali's Mahābhāshya⁷ and in various Buddhist commentaries as a coin but none of them

1. Text I, p.205.

2. Text I, p.261.

3. Text II, p.121.

4. Text II, p.112, 165.

5. Text II, p.216, 217, 221.

6. Jātaka, I. 120; I. 419.

7. केवलायाश्चेति वस्तुव्यम् कविणाकम् ।

furnish any idea about its weight or value. The Chulla-sethi Jātaka mentions the price of a dead mouse as one Kākanī. So Bhandarkar feels that it was almost the lowest money price of the day to serve as a food to a cat in the tavern. This ~~smaller~~ smaller token was intimately connected not only with the commercial life but also with the daily intercourse of the period to which these tales belong.⁸

The value of Kākinī as one-fourth Māshaka assigned by Kautilya perhaps continued during all this period. Nārada Smṛiti, dated in the Gupta period, gives the same value for it.⁹ But in the later period, in about eleventh -twelvth Centuries A.D. it was valued at 20 'Cowries'.¹⁰ Līlāvati, Vaijayantī and Medinikosa,¹¹ which belong to this period equate it with 20 Kapardakas or Varātakas. Śrīdharāchārya commenting on Gaṇitasāra gives the same equation i.e. 20 Kaudi (Cowries). It may also be interesting to point out that Medini-Kosa calls Kākinī also as Pāda-pāṇa. As we have seen

8. Carmichael Lectures, p.79.

9. Nārada Smṛiti, Parisishta, V.58.

10. Vaijayantī, p.247, Ll.11-12.

11. Medinikosa, p.88.

above Arthasāstra and Nārada-Smṛiti calls it Pāda-Māsha. If Pana and Māsha in the present context are one and the same is difficult to say.

Multiple and sub-multiple coins are suggested on the basis of some commentaries on Panini's Ashtādhyāyī. Kātyāyana in his Vārtikas refers to Kākaṇī and Ardha-Kākaṇī. Patañjali in an explanation says that an object purchased for $1\frac{1}{2}$ Kākaṇī was called Adhyardha-Kākaṇīka, for 2 Kākaṇīs, dvi-Kākaṇīka, and for a single Kākaṇī, Kākaṇīkā, Kāśīkā adds to it Tri-Kākaṇī. Agrawala (V.S.) thinks that all these denominations had their own coins. He has tried to identify silver Tri-Kākaṇī and Dvi-Kākaṇī, Adhyardha Kākaṇī and Kākaṇī coins from amongst those tiny coins which were found in Ujjain and Bhilsa area and were in the Advani collection. These coins weigh from 1.9 to 2.7 grains. According to Agrawala the standard weight for the Tri-Kākaṇī was 2.7 grains, and for Dvi-Kākaṇī 1.8 grains. According to him the weight of Adhyardha-Kākaṇī should have been $\frac{2}{3}$ Rattīs or 1.35 grains and some coins of the above mentioned collection weigh 1.3 to 1.0 grains. Kākaṇī according to him was $\frac{1}{3}$ Rattī

or 0.9 grains in weight.¹²

The only sub-multiple which may be associated with Kākanī is Ardha Kākanī, mentioned by Kautilya and Kātyāyana. According to the former it was of copper and was produced at the mint.¹³ According to Bhandarkar a copper Half-Kākanī must have a weight one-eighth of a Masha, that is one-eight of five Rattis, and as one Ratti is equivalent to 1.83 grains. Copper half Kākanī must have equalled 1.14¹⁴ grains. Agrawala (V.S.) postulates silver Ardha-Kākanī of $\frac{1}{2}$ Ratti or 0.9 Grains. He also thinks that there was a Raupya-Pāda Kākanī (silver quarter-Kākanī). ~~and these coins were found in the Kabul river~~
One of these coins found in the Kabul river weighs¹⁵ only 0.1358 grains. Gupta (P.L.) has gravely doubted the existence of any of these tiny silver coins. He has pointed out, firstly that it is difficult to say that the Rattis of the period was necessarily of 1.8 grains, which Agrawala has presumed. Secondly, the actual specimens, with the

12. J.N.S.I., XIII, p.166 ff.

13. Text I, p.205.

14. Carmichael Lectures, p.112.

15. J.N.S.I. III, p.167.

weight of which, the weights of various denominations have been identified, were found in the river beds, where they would have had gone through heavy corrosions. So, their present weight would ¹⁶ not be the same as their original weight. Gupta is perfectly justified in his objections. It may not be possible to assign any definite denominations to these minute coins; but the existence of tiny silver coins can not be denied. They may only be Kākaṇī or its multiples and ^{not} sub-multiples.

16. Punch-marked coins of Ancient India,
(unpublished thesis), p.191.